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Mid Day

news

Why would someone abandon this angel?

Wanted: Foster parents for infant found deserted along railway tracks

Shailesh Bhatia

TWO-year-old Pari is in plaster from the waist down. She suffered a hip fracture, and at the Shraddha Rehabilitation Foundation, Borivali, they don't even know how. Pari was found abandoned along the tracks between Charni Road and Grant Road railway stations.

Nearly a month after she was found, they say she cries sometimes for her mother, but social workers have little hope of finding her parents. Neha Mehta said the chances of Pari's parents coming to claim their daughter after a lapse of nearly 25 days is very thin.

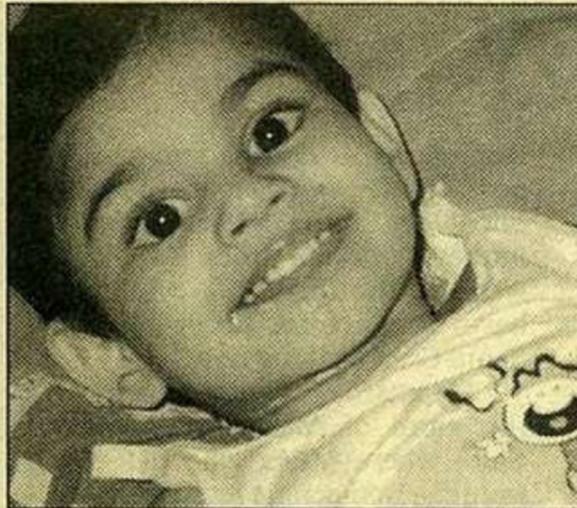
Instead, they hope to find a good foster home for Pari, who, except for her quickly

healing injuries, is back in good health. "Let's hope some good family comes forward to adopt her. It would be a pity to send such a wonderful child to an orphanage," Mehta said.

Pari was found on the tracks on May 20 at 8 am. She had suffered a hip fracture which caused both her legs to be externally rotated. She also had abrasions on her face, legs and thighs.

Was Pari thrown out of a train? Was she tossed over the fence lining the tracks? For how long did she lie there helplessly, in excruciating pain, before being spotted by a policeman? The answers are still a mystery.

According to Vitthal Damgude, senior inspector of police (Railways), Churchgate, Pari was immediately rushed to Nair Hospital, Mumbai Central, where doctors



A LOT TO SMILE ABOUT: Little Pari at Shraddha Rehabilitation Centre in Borivali, yesterday

performed extensive surgery and inserted metal plates to fix the fracture.

Damgude says, "My entire staff fell in love with Pari, from the time they set eyes on her. They took care of her day and night while she was in hospital. After her discharge, we approached different institutions who declined to help because of her medical condition."

Damgude then approached Dr Bharat Vatwani, who runs the Shraddha Rehabilitation Foundation centres in Borivali and Dahisar. Vatwani agreed to take Pari in.

"We were very sad to let go of Pari as she had become a part of us. A lady constable Sumitra Kuchekar even volunteered to take the child home, but as Pari needed medical attention, it was not possible," said

Damgude.

Vatwani, who along with wife Smitha has four children (three of whom are adopted) said, "We usually take care of mentally ill destitutes in our nursing homes, but we made an exception in Pari's case."

At the rehabilitation centre the as-yet-unidentified toddler got her new name, Pari, from the medical staff. Dr Sheetal Bhandari, of the centre, gushed, "She is the centre of attention here. She is such a playful child even though she is in plaster from the waist below and obviously in considerable discomfort. Her pink lips and the cutest of smiles make it impossible for anyone not to adore her."

Bhandari adds, "Pari is very fond of chikoo milkshakes and fresh lime juice. She needs constant attention and human company. There are times when she calls out to her mother, that's all she utters."

Dr Smitha Vatwani said the plaster will come off by June 20. "We will be consulting a physiotherapist then."

And of course, the hunt for foster parents will continue. Those around Pari, have their fingers crossed.